

May 4, 2000

Democrats Misrepresent Republican Reforms

<u>Myth</u>	<u>Fact</u>
<p><u>Title I Portability is a voucher.</u></p> <p>"Private school vouchers . . . are permissible under the Title I portability program."</p> <p>[Senator Kennedy, <i>Congressional Record</i>, 5/3/00, S 3288]</p>	<p><u>Title I Portability is not a voucher.</u></p> <p>"Portability is not a voucher program. All the money under portability stays with the public school systems. The public school systems write the check. The public school systems control the dollars."</p> <p>[Senator Gregg, <i>Congressional Record</i>, 5/3/00, S 3289]</p>
<p><u>S. 2 perpetuates the status quo.</u></p> <p>The Republican bill "is business as usual."</p> <p>[Senator Kennedy, <i>Congressional Record</i>, 5/1/00, S3149]</p>	<p><u>The status quo is the failure produced by Democrat command-and-control.</u></p> <p>Senator Tim Hutchinson reports that the 50-year-old Holly Grove School in Arkansas' Delta has poor heating, poor lighting, a collapsing ceiling, broken windows, and a dilapidated exterior. But thanks to a restrictive federal grant, it also has \$239,000 worth of state-of-the-art athletic equipment (including Stairmasters and Nautilus), perhaps to keep students warm. [see <i>Congressional Record</i>, 5/2/00, S3237]</p> <p>Ignoring schools' needs with one-size-fits-all mandates defines "business as usual."</p> <p>S. 2 marks the beginning of the end of the status quo.</p>

<u>Myth</u>	<u>Fact</u>
<p><u>Mandates enhance achievement.</u></p> <p>The Educational Opportunities Act (S.2) would “significantly eliminat[e] and reduc[e] the requirements which had been applicable at the local level, that ensure Title I funds were used effectively to enhance academic achievement.”</p> <p>[Senator Kennedy, <i>Congressional Record</i>, 5/1/00, S3146]</p>	<p><u>Mandates depress achievement.</u></p> <p>These “requirements” are <i>mandates</i> that tie the hands of educators.</p> <p>They are the principal reason why fully 60 percent of Title I 4th graders read below a basic level (compared to 30 percent of non-Title I 4th graders) despite the \$120 billion spent on Title I since 1965.</p> <p>[1998 National Assessment of Educational Progress]</p>
<p><u>Mandates equal “guarantees.”</u></p> <p>“On our side, . . . we are going to provide to parents some guarantees in the area of education . . . smaller class size . . . teacher training . . . afterschool programs . . . buildings that are in a state of collapse . . . Those are guarantees.”</p> <p>[Senator Kennedy, <i>Congressional Record</i>, 5/1/00, S3147-8]</p>	<p><u>Mandates guarantee waste.</u></p> <p>No, those are <i>mandates</i> that guarantee federal funds will be spent where they are not needed.</p> <p>“The answer on the other side is: Well, we will just start a school construction program from up here. Do you know what will happen then? We will spend school construction money where they don’t need school construction.”</p> <p>[Senator Hutchinson, <i>Congressional Record</i>, 5/2/00, S3236-7]</p> <p>In other words, mandates guarantee waste.</p> <p>The Republican bill eliminates waste by letting states and locals make spending decisions.</p>

<u>Myth</u>	<u>Fact</u>
<p><u>S. 2 lacks parental involvement.</u></p> <p>"I hope our friends on the other side of the aisle are going to spare us a lot of discussion about local control and parent involvement because it just isn't there, it just isn't there."</p> <p>[Senator Kennedy, <i>Congressional Record</i>, 5/1/00, S3148]</p>	<p><u>The opposite is "very clear."</u></p> <p>Under S. 2, "a parent directs that the services be provided through a tutorial assistance provider. It is not directed by the school but directed by the parent. I think that is one of the underlying flaws and concerns we have. . . . Frankly, the parent is in control. It is very clear in the language of this bill."</p> <p>[Senator Murray, <i>Congressional Record</i>, 5/3/00, S3289-90]</p>
<p><u>"Straight A's" ignores disadvantaged students.</u></p> <p>Under Straight A's "a State could demonstrate statewide overall progress based on progress being made by wealthier communities, while a lack of progress in disadvantaged communities remains statistically hidden."</p> <p>[Senator Kennedy, <i>Congressional Record</i>, 5/1/00, S3147]</p>	<p><u>S. 2 requires accountability for disadvantaged students.</u></p> <p>Straight A's requires each participating state, local, and school to report data "by each major racial and ethnic group, gender, English proficiency status, migrant status, and by economically disadvantaged students as compared to students who are not economically disadvantaged" [S. 2, as reported, p. 649-50].</p> <p>S. 2 contains similar requirements for the Child-Centered program, the Teacher Empowerment Act, school dropouts, advanced placement, Performance Partnerships, and bilingual education.</p>
<p><u>Poor kids need Title I.</u></p> <p>"The reason we have Title I is because we decided in 1965 that the needs of disadvantaged children were not being addressed."</p> <p>[Senator Kennedy, <i>Congressional Record</i>, 5/1/00, S3146]</p>	<p><u>Poor kids need Title I reform.</u></p> <p>The reason we must <i>reform</i> Title I is because the needs of disadvantaged children <i>are not</i> being addressed.</p>

<u>Myth</u>	<u>Fact</u>
<p><u>States already have full flexibility under Ed-Flex.</u></p> <p>“Is the Senator aware that under Ed-Flex, the governors have full flexibility to ask for a waiver for any kind of onerous regulation?”</p> <p>[Senator Kerry to Senator Ashcroft, <i>Congressional Record</i>, 5/3/00, S3311]</p>	<p><u>Ed-Flex does not give states full flexibility.</u></p> <p>According to the Congressional Research Service (CRS), Straight A’s gives states the ability to waive “requirements that cannot be waived under Ed-Flex” and has stricter accountability requirements.</p> <p>“I believe the correct interpretation of Ed-Flex is that there is substantial flexibility accorded to governors for certain programs, not for all programs.”</p> <p>[Senator Ashcroft to Senator Kerry, <i>Congressional Record</i>, 5/3/00, S3311]</p>
<p><u>Smaller classes are most important in boosting achievement.</u></p> <p>"Parents and educators have told me we need to invest in smaller class sizes. . . Studies are showing that reducing class size in the first, second, and third grades makes a difference in our students’ ability to read, to write, and to reduce discipline problems in our classrooms."</p> <p>[Senator Murray, <i>Congressional Record</i>, 5/3/00, S3292-3]</p>	<p><u>Quality teachers are most important.</u></p> <p>"In 1955 pupil-teacher ratios in public elementary and secondary schools were 30.2-to-one and 20.9-to-one respectively. In 1998 they were 18.9-to-one and 14.7-to-one. We now know it is possible to have, simultaneously, declining pupil-teacher ratios and declining scores on tests measuring schools’ cognitive results."</p> <p>[George F. Will, <i>Washington Post</i>, 5/4/00]</p> <p>"I ask the students — and I’m in a school every two weeks — ‘What do you think makes for good education?’ The first thing they say is good teachers. First thing. Even before, Senator Murray, lower class size."</p> <p>[Senator Wellstone, <i>Senate Current Proceedings</i>, 5/4/00]</p>

<u>Myth</u>	<u>Fact</u>
<p data-bbox="233 283 773 321"><u>Straight A's gives states a blank check.</u></p> <p data-bbox="233 353 756 427">"All the federal government would do is sign blank checks."</p> <p data-bbox="233 474 776 549">[Minority Leader Daschle, <i>Congressional Record</i>, 5/3/00, S3291]</p>	<p data-bbox="862 293 1411 368"><u>Straight A's demands results and holds states accountable.</u></p> <p data-bbox="862 406 1417 676">Under Straight A's, states must adopt specific, measurable, numerical performance goals to increase achievement levels for all students. States must stipulate exactly how much they will reduce the achievement gap between their highest and lowest performing students.</p> <p data-bbox="862 715 1425 942">If a state fails to meet its goals after five years, the Secretary may reduce funds for state administrative costs by 50 percent. If student performance declines for three consecutive years, the Secretary may terminate a state's participation.</p> <p data-bbox="862 981 1386 1087">CRS affirms that accountability under Straight A's would be far more "specific and 'strict'" than under Ed-Flex.</p>

Prepared by Michael F. Cannon, 224-2946